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# INTRODUCTION OF THE GREAT LAKES PROTECTION AND RESTORATION COMMITTEE ACT

**HON. VERNON J. EHLERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 20, 2004*

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce legislation that will move our Nation forward with increased environmental protection and restoration of the Great Lakes—the Great Lakes Protection and Restoration Committee Act.

The Great Lakes are a national treasure that we need to protect and restore. They contain 95 percent of our nation's surface freshwater, provide drinking water to millions of people and form the backbone for billions of dollars in shipping, trade, fishing and recreation. Progress has been made in improving environmental conditions in the Great Lakes Basin, but the lakes continue to face many threats, including pollution from contaminated sediments, stormwater and agricultural runoff, the introduction of invasive species, wetlands and coastal habitat loss, and pollutants washed into the lakes from the atmosphere.

While several federal, state, provincial and local programs have been developed to address these problems, these strategies are not well coordinated. According to an April 2003 GAO Report, "no one overarching strategy or plan unifies these strategies in the pursuit of a common goal. . . . An overarching strategy for the basin is needed to establish restoration goals, outline how restoration will occur, identify the resources needed to achieve restoration, assign accountability for restoration, and provide a mechanism for measuring progress for achieving goals."

This week, President Bush signed an Executive Order that establishes a task force to improve the coordination of federal agency efforts and to reach out to state, local, and private partners to develop consistent policies and strategies for Great Lakes restoration. I strongly support the action taken by President Bush, EPA Administrator Leavitt, and Council on Environmental Quality Chairman Connaughton because it will help bring collaboration among the broad collection of existing resources and programs in the region.

Next we need comprehensive legislation to continue to move us forward. The Great Lakes Protection and Restoration Committee Act will provide a path forward by bringing together all of the stakeholders in the basin, led by the Great Lakes State governors with the aid of relevant federal agency officials, tribal representatives, scientific experts and environmental and industry stakeholders. The Committee created by the legislation will develop a specific and comprehensive strategy for the purpose of protecting, preserving and restoring the Great Lakes.

Specifically, the task force will:

Assess accomplishments from current programs over the past 10 years;

Analyze the prospects for achieving restoration goals under current programs and authorities for the next 10 years;

Prioritize restoration goals identified by the Great Lakes governors;

Develop specific, measurable benchmarks for achieving those goals;

Recommend legislative options for obtaining such additional authority and funding as are necessary to achieve those goals;

Suggest methods to improve coordination among the existing federal, state, provincial, local, and non-governmental programs operating in the Great Lakes; and

Report to Congress and the President in one year on its findings and recommendations.

My goal is that the task force will develop a comprehensive, strategic protection and restoration program to bring together and coordinate the plethora of smaller programs that we have in place now.

This serious and measured approach mirrors the steps taken in other large ecosystem restoration projects such as the Everglades and Chesapeake Bay. Due to the complexity of those restoration initiatives, which cross over many jurisdictional lines, environmental challenges and scientific disciplines, it was essential to have an overall strategic plan in place to guide activities and funding decisions over long periods of time. The Great Lakes Basin is significantly larger and the environmental challenges substantially more complex than in those ecosystems. We need an overarching strategy in place to accomplish our vision to protect and restore the lakes.

A lack of adequate funding is certainly an impediment to successful cleanup efforts, but improved program coordination and operation under a comprehensive strategic plan is an essential first step. The Great Lakes Protection and Restoration Committee Act will move Great Lakes restoration forward to help protect and clean up this global treasure. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL, MR. MOSHE KATSAV, AT THE PRESIDENT'S PALACE IN BERLIN, APRIL 28, 2004

**HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 20, 2004*

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I recently attended the Conference on Anti-Semitism of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Berlin from April 28–29, 2004. I was privileged to attend as part of the official U.S. delegation, in my capacity as the Ranking Member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), commonly known as the Helsinki Commission. I was pleased to give a speech at the Berlin Conference, after visiting the concentration camps in Auschwitz, on the importance of fighting intolerance and speaking out against acts of anti-Semitism. Secretary of State Colin Powell attended the Conference and spoke forcefully about the need to combat anti-Semitism. Mr. LANTOS of California, the Ranking Member of the International Relations Committee, has already introduced Secretary Powell's statement into the RECORD. The 55 Participating States of the OSCE adopted a strong action plan, the Berlin Declaration,

which lays out specific steps for states to take regarding Holocaust education, data collection and monitoring of hate crimes against Jews, and improved coordination between non-governmental organizations and European law enforcement agencies.

During our Conference, on the evening of April 28, President Johannes Rau of Germany hosted a dinner for the President of the State of Israel Moshe Katsav. President Katsav spoke powerfully about the need to combat the rising tide of anti-Semitism throughout the world. Let me just highlight one section of President Katsav's remarks:

The violence against the Jews in Europe is evidence that anti-Semitism, which we have not known since the Second World War, is on the rise. This trend of the new anti-Semitism is a result of the aggressive propaganda, made possible by modern technologies, globalization and abuse of democracy and which creates an infrastructure for developing and increasing anti-Semitism, of a kind we have not known before \* \* \* Many times I have heard voices saying that anti-Semitism is not unique and that it is no different from other kinds of racism. Anti-Semitism should indeed receive special attention. Hatred against the Jews has existed for many generations and it is rooted in many cultures and continents through the world. However, now anti-Semitism has become an instrument for achieving political aims \* \* \* The genocide of the Jews was the result of anti-Semitism and was not caused by a war between countries or a territorial conflict and, therefore, anti-Semitism is a special danger for world Jewry and the whole of Europe.

Let me draw my colleagues attention to a particularly important part of the Berlin Declaration, in which the OSCE participating States "declare[d] unambiguously that international development of political issues, including those in Israel or elsewhere in the Middle East, never justify anti-Semitism." Let me be clear that I am not seeking to suppress legitimate criticism of Israel, just as I would not seek to silence those who criticize the policies of the U.S. Government. However, when individuals criticize the very existence of the Jewish state, equate Zionism with racism, and compare the Israeli Government to the Nazi regime, then all of us must say together: this is anti-Semitism, and you have crossed the line.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the full text of the Israeli President's remarks at the President's Palace in Berlin be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to read President Katsav's thoughtful remarks.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL, MR. MOSHE KATSAV, AT THE PRESIDENT'S PALACE IN BERLIN

Mr. President, Ministers, Distinguished Guests, Heads of Delegations:

It is very difficult and sad for me to stand here today in Berlin, 60 years after the Holocaust and to speak about anti-Semitism and the ways of fighting against it.

We, world Jewry, believed that after the terrible events of the Holocaust, it would not be necessary to struggle against anti-Semitism.

We believed that the world would not allow anti-Semitism to raise its head.

We believed that anti-Semitism belonged to the old world and to distant history.

We very much appreciate this gathering in Berlin. This step to fight anti-Semitism sends a very important message that this issue has a significant place in the European